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Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.

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Nellis 2000 Air Show





Welcome to the Nellis 2000 Air Show



File photo

Maj. Gen. L.D. Johnston, Air Warfare Center commander

Dear Nellis Guests,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Nellis 2000 Air Show.

We are proud to open our doors and allow you to meet our dedicated people as well as get a close look at America's airpower in action.

You will be thrilled by the USAF Thunderbirds, as well as many other military and civilian aerial events and ground displays.

We are honored to be your host and look forward to showing our Nevada neighbors the world's best Air Force!

Thanks for your support and have a great Air Force day.

L.D. JOHNSTON
Major General, USAF
Commander

Nellis history, then and now

World War II loomed on the horizon when the Army Air Corps created the Las Vegas Air Field and adjacent ranges. The new field served as the home of the first Army Gunnery School for gunners on bombers. A dirt runway, owned by Western Air Express, led to an active military air field collocated with the civilian air terminal. Las Vegas Army Air Field was ideally situated in sparsely populated desert, with wide "waste" land available for exercise, gunnery practice, and nearby dry lake beds (such as at Indian Springs) to land on.

The field's first aircraft were AT-6s and B-10s, followed by B-17s and B-24s in 1942. B-29 gunnery training began in 1945. The base trained 600 gunnery students and 215 copilots every five weeks, and the base population peaked at 11,000 in 1945.

After the war's end, Las Vegas Army Air Field became a demobilization field; thousands of troops passed through here on their way home. Mothballed in January 1947, the base reopened in December 1948 as Las Vegas Air Force Base. The newly-created Air Force renamed it Nellis Air Force in 1950, in honor of Lt. William H. Nellis who was killed in action over Belgium during the Battle of the Bulge.

Nellis Air Force Base entered into the Korean Conflict with a vengeance. It trained all the F-86 pilots who went to Korea, di-

rectly resulting in a 14 to 1 kill ratio against the superior MiG-15. During the Vietnam War, Nellis also hosted a combat wing, the 474th Tactical Fighter Wing, now inactivated conducted a multitude of experiments designed to improve combat capability.

A direct result of these studies was the Red Baron studies, which resulted in the RED FLAG exercises in 1975. These exercises train air combat warriors to fly, fight, and win. In 1991, Air Warrior, a joint exercise with the Army came to Nellis.

The base continues to provide combat capability to the U.S. Air Force through its innovative testing that allowed new tactics to go immediately to combat areas in Desert Storm, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Operations Northern and Southern Watch.

Nellis provides world-class advanced training in the USAF Weapons School and the USAF Air Ground Training School. Its Nevada Test and Training Range provides the most advanced capability in the world for exercises and test and tactics evaluation.

Nellis hosts the Air Warfare Center, the 57th Wing, the 99th Air Base Wing, elements of the 53rd Wing, an Army brigade, and units, detachments and operating locations of a variety of other organizations.

Compiled by History Office



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The deadline for article submissions to the *Bullseye* is Thursday prior to the following week's publication. Articles must be typed and double spaced. Also include a name and a phone number of a person to contact should questions arise. Stories should be submitted directly to the Bullseye Office in Bldg. 620, or call 652-5814. Stories can be mailed to AWFC/PAI, Nellis AFB, NV 89151-5000. Submissions may also be sent via e-mail at bullseye10@earthlink.net

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For advertising information call 1-877-247-9288.



Nellis 2000 Air Show entertainment



Courtesy photo

Wayne Newton helps kick off Nellis 2000 Air Show

A lot has come and gone since Wayne Newton first set the entertainment world on fire as a precocious, big-voiced 6 year old. In a business that is, at best, volatile and success sometimes short-lived, Wayne has performed live, to more than 30 million people. When television and records are included, it's many times that number. He has epitomized the talent, glamour and energy that is Las Vegas, the entertainment capital of the world, for so long that he is called "Mr. Las Vegas." Mr. Newton will be welcoming Las Vegas to Nellis' air show during opening ceremonies.

House of Blues rocks Air Show

Jim Belushi and the Sacred Hearts Band, Youth Ambassadors, The Coates Twins, Loveshack, Willie Jaye, Steel Wheels and The Maxx are all scheduled to perform at this year's air show.

D. Jay's entertainment will perform between featured acts.

Look for the House of Blues stage on the map. This year's entertainment offers good fun for visitors of all ages.

Right, Rashell plays the guitar and Laura rocks the bass. They have been busy playing honky-tonks and casinos throughout the country.



Photos Courtesy of House of Blues



Jim Belushi and the Sacred Hearts are scheduled to rock the House of Blues' stage with their trademark style of blues mixed with rock.



Left, Willie Jaye specializes in traditional, rock and original blues music. He is set to blaze the crowd with his rhythm guitar.

Information courtesy of the The House of Blues

Corporate sponsors

Arcata
House of Blues
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Help solve a crime

The 99th Security Forces Investigation section has a "Secret Witness" Hotline. Callers may remain anonymous. The number is 652-8089.

Straight Talk

To get up to date information, call the Straight Talk line at 652-4038.

Air Show time line

All times subject to change

8:00 a.m.	Gates open
9:45 a.m.	Major General L.D. Johnston, Air War fare Center Commander, welcomes Las Vegas to Nellis 2000 Air show
	Canadian Skyhawks perform the opening jump
10:00 a.m.	Jumpers touchdown with American and Canadian flags
10:05 a.m.	Dawn Patrol (vintage aircraft) fly-by followed by F-15 four-ship fly-by
10:10 a.m.	Remainder of Canadian Skyhawks jump
10:20 a.m.	Jumpers touchdown; America On Line Demonstration
10:25 a.m.	Toyota Demonstration
10:40 a.m.	F-86 Demonstration
10:50 a.m.	Yak 54 Demonstration
11:05 a.m.	OA-37 Demonstration
11:15 a.m.	Pitts (civilian acrobatic plane) Demonstration
11:25 a.m.	F-260 Demonstration
11:36 a.m.	F-4 Demonstration
11:55 a.m.	Stoli MiG 17 Demonstration
12:10 p.m.	Fina Extra 300 Demonstration
12:24 p.m.	T-6 Demonstration
12:42 p.m.	T-34 Demonstration
1:00 p.m.	A-10 Demonstration
1:15 p.m.	Toyota Demonstration
1:40 p.m.	MiG 17 Demonstration
1:55 p.m.	MiG 17/ F-86 Photo pass
1:54 p.m.	F-18 Demonstration
2:15 p.m.	Jim Belushi and the Sacred Hearts Band Performs
	Canadian Skyhawks Jump
2:25 p.m.	69th Special Operations Group (civilian) Demonstration
3:10 p.m.	U.S. Air force Air Demonstration Squadron "The Thunderbirds" perform
3:15 p.m.	Thunderbird demonstration concludes
4:45 p.m.	Nellis 2000 Air Show 2000 concludes
5:00 p.m.	

Air show briefs

Food and beverages will be available for purchase.



Booths with souvenirs and a variety of air show memorabilia will be setup throughout the flightline.

Please do not bring:

Weapons, coolers, pets, backpacks or carry bags (except baby bags) food or beverages, bicycles, roller blades, roller skates, skateboards and private golf carts.

Disabled access:

Disabled parking is available on Nellis.

Additional acts and displays

TBM-3 "Avenger"
69th Battalion Special Operations Group:
A-37 Dragonfly
O1-A Bird Dog
OV-1 Mohawk
O-2B Cessna
A-1 Skyraider

Rob Harrison Airshows
"The Tumbling Bears"
The Constellation Group
"Connie"
Red Star Air Show
MiG 17

See Map on Page 14





Mopar T-34 takes on Nellis



Julie Clark

Award winning veteran pilot, Captain Julie Clark, is North America's only solo T-34 aerobatic performer. Ms. Clark has represented Mopar, Daimler Chrysler's Parts and Accessories Division, for more than a decade, while performing air shows for more than 20 years. Ms. Clark's graceful aerial ballet is a symbol of pride and patriotism.

A pilot for more than 30 years and a captain with Northwest Airlines, Julie was one of the first women pilots to fly for a major airline. She has logged over 25,000 accident free hours in the air and is checked out in more than 65 types of aircraft including the famous World War II B-17

bomber and PBY-5 flying boat.

The Mopar T-34 demands tremendous skill to fly aerobatics, requiring great coordination and anticipation. Julie's aerobatics routine is truly remarkable in its beauty and splendor. Her unique presentation of "Serenade in Red, White and Blue," with a special added patriotic tribute, is breathtakingly choreographed to Lee Greenwood's "God Bless the USA" or "God Bless You Canada." Multicolored wing-tip smoke is used, concluding with a dazzling fireworks finale.

Julie Clark's dedication has earned not only the admiration of fans everywhere, but also a long list of awards and honors. In 1998, Ms. Clark received the prestigious Art Scholl Memorial Award for Showmanship.

Editor's note:

Compiled from Press data

Toyota AirSports to amaze Nellis spectators

Aerobatic champion Kent Gorton will amaze air show spectators at Nellis 2000 Air Show, with sensational demonstration that includes razor-sharp precision aerobatics combined with a variety of outrageous maneuvers like Corolla Torque Rolla, the Toyota Tomato, and a maneuver created especially for this event, Thunder Over Nellis.

Winner of the 1995 British Columbia Open in the Advanced Category, Mr. Gorton is an accomplished aerobatic competition pilot. At age 32, the Seattle native is also one of the youngest pilots in the air show industry. Soloing at 14, Mr. Gorton quickly advanced his aviation career flying a number of exciting aircraft including B-17s, Lear Jets and Pitts Specials. Mr. Gorton has over 3,000 hours of flight time and has spent numerous hours instructing aerobatic stu-



Kent Gorton

dents.

Continual training and practice maintain Mr. Gorton's tolerance for high "G" loads. The combination of physical conditioning and intense mental concentration keeps his flying skills sharp. During a typical air show demonstration, Mr. Gorton will pull up to 10 G's, meaning he will weigh as much as 10 times his body weight when executing some of his spectacular maneuvers.

Designed exclusively for

maximum performance aerobatics, the Toyota AirSports Corolla Demonstration Plane was custom-built in Germany by Walter Extra. With a fuel injected, 540-cubic-inch, 300+ horsepower Lycoming engine, Mr. Gorton can fly straight up for over 3,000 feet or fly straight and level over 250 mph. The AirSports Corolla's carbon fiber and epoxy wing and fuselage are stronger and lighter than aircraft made from wood and metal. The combination of weight and high strength allows Mr. Gorton to pull high "G's" and roll the AirSports Corolla over 400 degrees in one second.

Mr. Gorton's autograph sessions will be announced over the air show public address system, and limited supply of pictures and posters will be given on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Editor's note:

Compiled from Press data



The Thunderbirds' F-16 Fighting Falcon in motion

The F-16 Fighting Falcon is a compact, multi-role fighter aircraft. It is highly maneuverable and has proven itself in air-to-air combat and air-to-surface attack. It provides a relatively low-cost, high-performance weapon system for the United States and allied nations.

In an air combat role, the F-16's maneuverability and combat radius exceed that of all potential threat fighter aircraft. It can locate targets in all weather conditions and detect low flying aircraft in radar ground clutter.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Kevin Gruenwald



Thunderbirds roar into the new millennium

By Staff Sgt. Bob Purtiman
Thunderbird Public Affairs

The United States Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron ushers in the new millennium with a very busy season. The team will perform more than 60 demonstrations in 25 states and Canada. The team will also return to Europe for the first time since 1996. Representing the most advanced air and space force in the world, the Thunderbirds celebrate their 47th anniversary in 2000.

The team's first performance was June 8, 1953 at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz. Since then, the Thunderbirds have flown before more than 310 million people at more than 3,500 air demonstrations in all 50 states and 59 foreign countries.

"Our job is to demonstrate the professional qualities the Air Force develops in the people who fly, maintain and support the aircraft," said Lt. Col. John Venable, the team's commander/leader. "We are a mirror-image of every other frontline fighter unit in the Air Force. Every member of the team is critical to the success of the mission."

"Because of military budget cuts and down sizing, a perception exists that the Air Force is out of the hiring business. Quite

the contrary. That is why the Thunderbirds are here. Our red, white and blue jets are a vivid reminder to young people that the Air Force is still hiring," said Lt. Col. Venable. "We need more than 30,000 new recruits this year alone."

Assigned to Air Combat Command, the team is made up of eight pilots (six demonstration pilots), four support officers, four civilians and more than 100 enlisted in 27 career fields. Between March and November, the Thunderbirds average nearly 70 demonstrations, keeping them on the road more than 200 days.

"During the demonstration, the pilots fly the same maneuvers that every Air

Force pilot. 18 inches and three feet apart, represents the skill and training of every U.S. Air Force pilot.

"Because of the aircrafts' proximity to each other, there's little margin for error," explained Capt. Rick Boutwell, left wing. "With my canopy 18 inches below the boss' wing tip, I have to have tremendous confidence that he won't flinch during a maneuver."

Thunderbird solo pilots' job is to highlight the capabilities of the team's "bird of prey" — the F-16C Fighting Falcon, first flown by the Thunderbirds in 1982.

"The F-16 is the best aircraft to show the crowd what our Air Force is all about," said lead solo, Maj. Dean Wright. "As solo pi-

selves into a safe and reliable aircraft every time. "Without their dedication, attention to detail and long hours of preparing for the performance, the demonstration may not be possible," said Lt. Col. Venable.

Twenty-two maintainers who show they have the initiative and the drive it takes to keep the team's F-16s mission ready, are assigned directly to an aircraft as a dedicated or assistant crew chief.

"Our pilots and crew chiefs work closely together throughout the year," explained advance crew chief Staff Sgt. Scott Hooks. "It's a direct reflection of the pride and professionalism that exists in



Courtesy photo

Force specialties are represented on the team," said Senior Master Sgt. Mary Kochel, Thunderbirds first sergeant. "Everyone is a true professional who believes they represent their fellow airmen."

Watching a Thunderbird performance provides only a small glimpse into how 360,000 Air Force professionals perform every day.

"It's an honor for us to represent the Air Force," said Chief Master Sgt. Michael Mlodzik, maintenance superintendent. "It means a lot to all of us representing the quality of the pilots, maintainers, and aviation support people who continue to make the U.S. Air Force the best in the world."

**See related stories on
Pages 22, 24 and 27.**



Force pilot learns in initial training," said Maj. Mike Byrne, the team's operations officer. "Safety is paramount and key to planning the demonstration maneuvers."

The Thunderbird diamond formation, flying an average distance between

lots we demonstrate everything from the slow-speed handling of the aircraft to its maneuverability and agility."

More than 60 aircraft maintainers ensure the Thunderbirds' fleet of 12 F-16s are mission capable and the pilots strap them-

every Air Force unit." In addition to pilots and maintainers, there are an additional 30 people behind the scenes supporting the Thunderbird mission in operations, communications, administration, supply and public affairs.

"Only a handful of Air



File photo



File photo

“Red Bull” is here

“MiG Magic” Air Shows presents the nationally popular air show act “Red Bull.” The MiG-17 aircraft, Red Bull Meteor, is the world’s only jet fighter, night-aerobatic, pyro act featuring 1,000 feet of fire from each wing. He’ll be performing his night pyro act today at 8 p.m. over the flightline.

Russian Thunder

The Russian Thunder is one of the only five Yak 54s flying in the world. This very rare aircraft was manufactured in Saratov, Russia in 1996. Although the Yak name goes back to the late 30s this aircraft is the very latest design coming out of Russia.

Designed in 1995, the Yakevlev Design Bureau’s mission was to build a two-seat aircraft capable of unlimited aerobatics at the world class level, and world class it is. Flying with a capability of positive 9G’s to a negative 7G’s, Russian Thunder is designed to take these levels of gravitational forces. High G turns, multiple rolls and gyroscopic tumbles are

just a few of the maneuvers you will see.

Nearly twice the size of the “quick little” monoplanes, Russian Thunder is big and powerful. This size advantage looks closer and lower, sending the crowd home feeling satisfied knowing they have seen something different.

Editor’s note: Compiled from press data

Right, Russian Thunder will be flown by pilot Eric Beard, president of Aircraft Appraisers & Technical Advisors, Inc.



File photo



Bombers take to Nellis flightline



Above, The B-1B Lancer is a long-range strategic bomber, capable of flying intercontinental missions without refueling, then penetrating present and future sophisticated enemy defenses. It can perform a variety of missions, including that of a conventional weapons carrier for theater operations. The B-1B's electronic jamming equipment, infrared countermeasures, radar location and warning systems complement its low-radar cross-section and form an integrated defense system for the aircraft. The swing-wing design and turbo fan engines not only provide greater range and high speed at low levels but they also enhance the bomber's survivability.



File photos

The B-2 Spirit is a multi-role bomber capable of delivering both conventional and nuclear munitions. A dramatic leap forward in technology, the bomber represents a major milestone in the U.S. bomber modernization program. The B-2 brings massive firepower to bear, in a short time, anywhere on the globe through previously impenetrable defenses.

Above, The B-52 Stratofortress is a long-range, heavy bomber that can perform a variety of missions. The bomber is capable of flying at high subsonic speeds at altitudes up to 50,000 feet. It can carry nuclear or conventional ordnance with worldwide precision navigation capability. The use of aerial refueling gives the B-52 a range limited only by crew endurance.

U-2 rises above this year's air show crowd



File photos



The U-2 Dragon Lady provides continuous day or night, high-altitude, all-weather, stand-off surveillance of an area in direct support of U.S. and allied ground and air forces. It provides critical intelligence to decision makers through all phases of conflict, including peacetime indications and warnings, crises, low-intensity conflict and large-scale hostilities. The U-2 is a single-seat, single-engine, high-altitude, reconnaissance aircraft. Long, wide, straight wings give the U-2 glider-like characteristics. It can carry a variety of sensors and cameras, is an extremely reliable reconnaissance aircraft, and enjoys a high mission completion rate.





Courtesy photo

Left, Jim Modes will be flying an AT-6 for his aerobatic performance demonstrating military fighting maneuvers just above the ground.

Right, Chuck Lische, and the F-260 Warrior will present a 12-minute aerobatic routine that incorporates Chuck's legendary elegant style and original maneuvers with the famous military high performance F-260 flight characteristics.



Courtesy photo



RQ-1A Predator will capture air show crowd's attention



File photos

The Air Force introduced the RQ-1A Predator, an unmanned aerial vehicle, about three years ago. It has flown missions deemed too dangerous, dull or dirty for human pilots to undertake; for example, NATO force protection, search and rescue, target acquisition, battle damage assessment and peacekeeping support. Live video pictures from Predator feed into satellites, which are relayed in real-time to 34 major allied and U.S. headquarters, such as NATO, U.N. Forces, U.S. Air Forces in Europe and the situation room of the Pentagon. Nellis has two Predator units, the 11th and 15th Reconnaissance Squadrons.



The Air Force's cargo planes demonstrate capabilities

Right, With its tremendous payload capability, the gigantic C-5 Galaxy, an outsized-cargo transport, provides the Air Mobility Command intertheater airlift in support of United States national defense.



File photos



The C-17 Globemaster III is the newest, most flexible cargo aircraft to enter the airlift force. The C-17 is capable of rapid strategic delivery of troops and all types of cargo to main operating bases or directly to forward bases in a deployment area.



The C-141B Starlifter is the workhorse of the Air Mobility Command. The Starlifter fulfills the vast spectrum of airlift requirements through its ability to airlift combat forces over long distances, deliver those forces and their equipment either by air, land or airdrop.

Above, The KC-135 Stratotanker's principal mission is air refueling. This asset greatly enhances the Air Force's capability to accomplish its mission of Global Engagement. It also provides aerial refueling support to U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps and allied aircraft. A special shuttlecock-shaped drogue, attached to and trailed behind the flying boom, may be used to refuel aircraft fitted with probes. An operator stationed in the rear of the plane controls the boom. A cargo deck above the refueling system can hold a mixed load of passengers and cargo.



The F-15 Eagles showcases its superior maneuverability



File photos

The F-15C is an all-weather, extremely maneuverable, tactical fighter allows the Air Force to gain and maintain air superiority in aerial combat. The F-15's air superiority is achieved through a mixture of unprecedented maneuverability and acceleration, range, weapons and avionics.





HH-60G PAVEHAWK to the rescue



File photos

The HH-60G Pavehawk is equipped with an all-weather radar which enables the crew to avoid inclement weather. To extend their range, Pavehawks are also equipped with a retractable in-flight refueling probe and internal auxiliary fuel tanks. Pavehawks are also equipped with a rescue hoist with a 200-foot cable and 600-pound lift capacity. All HH-60Gs have an automatic flight control system to stabilize the aircraft in typical altitudes. The non-retractable landing gear consists of two main landing gears and a tail wheel. Nellis is home to 66th Rescue Squadron one of the five Air Force's HH-60 units.



Thunderbird pilots display American airpower

By Capt. Guy Hunneyman
Thunderbird Public Affairs

The Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron has been inspiring the young, instilling confidence in the old and making Americans proud of their Air Force since the first demonstration more than 47 years ago.

This year, the Thunderbirds will bring the U.S. Air Force to audiences in North America and Europe, displaying the pride, precision and professionalism of the 360,000 men and women serving in today's Air Force.

"Our squadron acts as a looking glass into the U.S. Air Force," said Lt. Col. John Venable, Thunderbird commander/leader. "The precision flying, dedication to the mission and esprit- de-corps projected by every member of our team can be seen throughout the rest of the service."

The demonstration pilots, flying as a single unit, demonstrate the skills and techniques demanded of every Air Force fighter pilot. This ranges from basic loops, rolls and formation flying taught in initial flight training, to more advanced air combat tactics.

"The distance between us and the lead aircraft ranges from 18-inches to 3-feet during a demonstration, depending on the maneuver," said Capt. Rick Boutwell, a first year left wing man. "This requires us to place extreme

trust in each other. I have total confidence in the flying abilities of my teammates."

To become proficient and ensure a safe season, the demonstration pilots fly numerous of practice sorties over the Indian Springs Auxiliary Air Field range from mid-November to mid-March.

"We fly more than 100 missions per pilot before the show season ever begins - this is in addition to the hundreds of hours spent in ground preparation," said Maj. Scott Bowen, in his second year in the slot position. "We use a building block approach following a strict syllabus, flying lower and in tighter formations in preparation for the show season."

In addition to showing the public the skill of Air Force pilots, the demonstrations also exhibit the capabilities in one of the United States' most modern and combat proven, high-performance fighter aircraft.

The Lockheed Martin F-16C Fighting Falcon, the squadron's current demonstration aircraft, is a world-class fighter in every respect. Among its capabilities is its ability to fly fast and turn tight. Lead Solo, Maj. Dean Wright, demonstrates both.

"I get to push the F-16 to its limits," Wright said. "From flying at minimum airspeed to performing a 360 degree high G-force turn at 600 miles per hour, the solo profile demonstrates the superb maneuver-



File photo

ing capabilities of the F-16."

Together with a talented ground support team and thrilling aerial maneuvers, the Thunderbirds demonstrate the full spectrum of Air Force professionals.

"Our air demonstrations are a mirror-image of the everyday Air Force," Lt. Col. Venable said. "We do what every Air Force fighter pilot is doing around the world, whether it be monitoring no-fly zones over Iraq and Bosnia or ensuring peace over Korea."

This season marks the 47th year for the Thunderbirds. Each demonstration stands as a tribute to the excellence and dedication of all members of the Air Force, past and present.



Photo by Mr. Kevin Kelly



File Photos

The Twelfth Air Force **A-10 Demonstration Team**

The 12th Air Force A-10 Demonstration Team is one of six fighter demonstration teams sponsored by the Air Combat Command of the U.S. Air Force.

The 12th Air Force A-10 Demonstration Team is assigned to the 355th Wing at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Tucson, Ariz.

During the 1999 season, the team performed 82 demonstrations for over 11.5 million spectators at 32 different locations in the United States and Canada.

The team demo pilot and officer-in-charge is Lt. Col. Jeff Lowery, a veteran fighter pilot with more than 16 years experience in high performance aircraft.

Narrators for the performance are either

Maj. Jim Marks, Capt. Robert Brogan or 1st Lt. Todd Henninger.

The team has a NCO-in-charge and six crew chiefs assigned to provide dedicated maintenance support.

Three of these individuals travel to each show location. They include Master Sgt. Eileen Pattarozzi, Staff Sgt. Steven Sepeda, Staff Sgt. Rich Lopez, Staff Sgt. Adrian Hitz, Senior Airman Dan Gonzalez, Senior Airman Carlo Monticolo III, and Airman 1st Class Calvin Dingle.

The A-10 tactical demonstration is designed to highlight the superior performance characteristics of the close air support aircraft.

The combination of high and low

speed maneuvering, rapid rolls, maximum performance climbs, descents and simulated weapons employment vividly illustrate the Thunderbolt's capabilities.

The Demonstration Team's mission is to demonstrate proficiency, excellence and to promote recruiting and retention through an understanding of the Air Force and its mission.

In conjunction with each performance, team members answer questions about the demonstration and the Air Force in general.

Team members also perform school and hospital visits, community service and media appearances at air show locations.



*1997 Air
Show
highlights*



File photos



The

Thunderbirds

Line up!



Lt. Col. John Venable, commander/leader flies the number one jet, leading all air demonstrations and commands the 120-person squadron.



Capt. Rick Boutwell flies the number two jet as left wing in the diamond formation.



Maj. Jon Greene flies the number three jet as right wing in the diamond formation.



Maj. Scott Bowen flies the number four jet, known as the slot, in the diamond formation.



Maj. Dean Wright flies the number five jet as the lead solo pilot.



Maj. Kevin Mastin flies the number six jet as the opposing solo pilot.



Maj. Mike Byrne flies the number seven jet as the team's operations officer.



Maj. Ken Edwards flies the number eight jet as the team's advance pilot and narrator.



Capt. (Dr.) Jay Flottmann is the team's flight surgeon.



Capt. Charlie Underhill is the team's executive officer.



Capt. Stacey Hawkins is the team's maintenance officer.



Capt. Guy Hunneyman is the team's public affairs officer.



Stealthy F-117 makes appearance at Nellis



File photos

The F-117A Nighthawk is the world's first operational aircraft designed to exploit low-observable stealth technology. The unique design of the single-seat F-117A provides exceptional combat capabilities. The twin-engine aircraft is powered by two General Electric F404 turbofan engines and has quadruple redundant fly-by-wire flight controls. Air refuelable, it supports worldwide commitments and adds to the deterrent strength of the U.S. military forces. The F-117A can employ a variety of weapons and is equipped with sophisticated navigation and attack systems.



Support team works behind the scenes

By Staff Sgt. Bob Purtiman
Thunderbird Public Affairs

The highlight of every air show is the Thunderbirds performance. The crowd gets the chance to see the maintainers perform their ground show and the pilots perform their aerial ballet.

What the crowd doesn't see is the work done behind the scenes, sometimes months before the show season begins. A majority of the 120 enlisted troops are aircraft maintainers, but the others work in operations, public affairs, administration, communications and supply.

Two operations specialists are assigned to oversee the team's flying program.

"The two of us make sure flying hours and pilot qualifications are current," said Tech. Sgt. Casey Brown, operations specialist. "We also update the flying schedule, arrange air space to practice in and supervise the airfield and runway when we travel."

To take care of the pilots life support needs, the team employs two life support specialists.

"All helmets, masks, harnesses, and G-suits are maintained by our

section," said Staff Sgt. Miguel Tafoya. "We also inspect parachutes and survival kits in ejection seats and provide extensive training to incentive, media and orientation flyers."

The public affairs team is made up of an officer and eight enlisted specialists.

"Recruiting and reinforcing the public's confidence in the Air Force are two of the squadron's primary objectives," said Master Sgt. Joe Kubistek, Thunderbird public affairs superintendent. "We design the team's promotional products, document squadron activities, provide video and photos for publicity, and oversee extensive community and media relations programs."

Working with operations, life support and maintenance, public affairs manages a high-visibility orientation flight program that increases publicity opportunities. These flights are flown by the operations officer and advance pilot/narrator.

"We have a two-seat F-16D that we use for these flights," said Maj. Ken Edwards, the advance pilot/narrator. "I use the aircraft to deploy with my advance crew chief a

day ahead of the rest of the team. We ensure everything is in place for the team's arrival."

The operations officer is responsible for pilot and crowd safety.

"During an air demonstration, I control a portion of airspace 5 miles in radius," said Maj. Mike Byrne, Thunderbird pilot. "If another aircraft enters the airspace or people are in the area we are performing over, we'll stop the show until the area is safe for us to fly in. I also critique each performance and review the video of each show with the demonstration pilots, pointing out any discrepancies I noticed."

Maj. Edwards narrates the show from the team's communications trailer, which is located at show center. The squadron's communications section employs three ground radio and two video technicians.

"Every show is recorded for debrief, critique, safety and historical record," said Tech. Sgt. Robert Brown, video technician. "The ground radio technicians keep the operations officer in constant contact with the pilots and air traffic control tower."

To accomplish the mission the

team needs extra parts and equipment. That job falls into the hands of the supply section.

"We order parts and equipment, and use all available means to get the items to the people who need them as quickly as possible," said Master Sgt. Greg Taylor, sortie support flight superintendent. "We also issue the tools and equipment our maintainers use to work on the aircraft."

Nine specialists are assigned to handle the team's administrative support.

"We have people working in information management, financial services and personnel," said Tech. Sgt. DeAnn Denzer, administrative superintendent. "We maintain records, track correspondence, hire replacements for departing members, and oversee the squadron's budget."

The commitment of these team members contributes greatly to every performance.

"The hard work done by the entire Thunderbird team is a reflection of the everyday work done in the Air Force," said Lt. Col. John Venable, Thunderbird commander/leader. "Each person provides a link in accomplishing the mission, and takes pride in displaying that mission to the world."